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ART, XV.—*History of Tennasserim, by Captain JAMES LOW,  
Madras Army, M. R. A. S., &c. &c.*

(Continued from p. 104.)

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## CHAPTER XIV. (*concluded.*)

### JOURNEY FROM TAVOY TO MARTABAN.

THE route to Martaban had not before this period been explored by Europeans, nor frequented by the natives since 1810, when an army marched by it on the way to attack Junk-Ceylon; and a dread of the Siamese had caused it to be almost abandoned by the subjects of his Burman Majesty. To ascertain the nature of the intervening country seemed desirable, as well in a geographical light, as on account of the interest which it would claim in the event of the new conquests being permanently retained by the British. Most of the baggage, and the sick, were sent off by sea. My escort consisted of a native officer, two non-commissioned officers, and eighteen sepoy, two interpreters, two guides, four servants, and about 100 followers, to carry baggage and provisions; which, however, were found inadequate afterwards, so that more were hired at Yea.

*March 25th, 1825.*—We left Tavoy at mid-day in open boats, and were hurried rapidly up the river by the tide. It left us at Yebyú, a small village on the west bank, where chillies are the chief objects of culture. Found much difficulty in landing my horse, the banks being from fifteen to twenty feet high, and the breaks in it muddy.

*26th.*—Wombo was the next stage. Here are a few miserable huts, romantically situated. The current was so strong that we could not get under weigh until next day's tide. We were half suffocated with heat in the wretched hovel which sheltered us from the direct rays of the sun. Thermometer here at 90°

*27th.*—Three hours' rowing brought us to Chea-kaung Stockade, which guards a very narrow passage in the river. We had not seen a hut during this day's rowing, and the river-banks were covered with thick and high jungle. Several rocks were observed in the river.

A herd of wild buffaloes passed across the stream during the night. Several shots were fired at them, and one dropped, to the satisfaction of all parties, as salt fish was the only sort of food brought by the people.

The tide only reaches a few hundred yards beyond this narrow

passage, and the river is not navigable to boats further, excepting when the stream is swollen by the monsoon rains. The general breadth of its bed is fifty yards on an average. Captain Read, of a Rangoon transport-ship, who had obliged me by accompanying me so far, now set off on his return to Tavoy.

28th.—Crossed the river, and walked over a difficult country clothed with bamboo and other jungle, and much intersected by rugged nullahs, dry, for the most part, at this season. Observed one stockade on the way, lying on the west bank. It is built of upright trunks of trees, ten feet high, and is a square of twenty paces. Reached *Heinje* stockade after a hot march. Crossed over to it, the stream being twenty-four paces wide and knee deep; but the channel is 290 yards wide. The distance gone to-day nine and a quarter miles. *Heinje* stockade was in good preservation, and resembled those already noticed; it is a square of forty paces. I could not gain a view above 300 yards on any side.

29th.—The heat of the weather increased, but I had no option as to the line of marching, since it would have been impossible to advance through thick jungle by an intricate and half obliterated track before day-light. The mercury at seven, A.M., showed 74° of temperature. Set off at a quarter past nine, and having marched rather more than seven miles, found ourselves at Kalíng-aung stockade. This place has been formerly noticed as having been, according to tradition, the site of a town which was built by a colony from Pegu. Not a vestige of such now remains, unless an old and small pagoda, called *Heinze*, surmounting a hill, and some ruins to the northward, as was reported afterwards, may be considered as favouring the tradition.

Kalíng-aung stockade was a frontier Burman post to prevent the Siamese descending the river, which in the rainy season can be done in boats with amazing rapidity. It was then in good repair, and very defensible against native troops<sup>1</sup>. It was placed at an inner bend of the river—here very deep for some distance beyond both of its flanks. The country around is a valley about three miles wide, but quite waste; not an inhabitant appeared. On entering the stockade, however, one good thatched cottage was found; its owners had fled, leaving nothing but their rice, salt, and putrid balachong behind. These poor people were perhaps elephant-hunters. Some oranges, limes, papayas, and jacks, were procured from the trees which grew inside.

<sup>1</sup> It would appear that some fire which had been left by my people after cooking had, subsequent to our leaving the place, set the long grass in a blaze, by which the stockade was burned down.

30th.—Crossed the river six furlongs and a half above the stockade.

I was enabled to mount my horse at intervals during this day's march. Having halted at sun-rise to observe the bearing of a peak, a thin smoke attracted my attention, as it arose from an oval plain, called En Byen bien; receiving no satisfactory reply to my inquiries at my guides, I pulled off my shoes and waded through a deep slough to the brink of a pool in the midst of the plain, when I found my conjecture, as to its being a hot spring, realized.

The pool is 40 feet in diameter, being nearly a circle, and is, apparently, (for the ground being level, it could not be very distinctly seen,) of great depth. Water taken from the middle, where the bubbling was most violent, was found to raise Fahrenheit's thermometer to 104°.

There are no hills very close to this well, nor any volcanic appearances. Several rocky low hills in the vicinity have a scorched aspect, but they are chiefly composed of granite, which, by exposure, gains a blackish hue.

Advanced only seven miles and a quarter to-day, as the porters complained that their loads galled them. Got under cover of high trees on the banks of the Indaraja-cahaung, or Eintayasa-kyaung, a small stream. This place was once inhabited, but is now a desert. The thermometer at four, P.M., at 92°.

31st.—The extreme heat of the weather after eight o'clock in the morning, made me attempt to march at four, A.M., this day. As I suspected would be the case, the guides lost the direction, and we had to wait patiently on the ground until day-light. We then pushed on fast over a more open jungle than hitherto—crossed many nullahs, both dry and muddy, but without seeing any habitation, or any sign of the track being inhabited, and halted at ten, A.M., (after having advanced eleven miles,) at a place called Mentha-chakhan (chakhan, means a stage,) on the banks of the Mendai Kyaung river, now only yielding a scanty supply of bad water.

We found no drinkable water during the whole of this march, and the grass was quite parched up. A red tulip-looking flower, called *Paine*, seemed the only plant not affected by the heat; numbers shot up amongst the withered grass and leaves; this flower is eaten by the Burmans in curry; it may be found in their bazaars amongst the numerous kinds of esculent plants, leaves, buds, and roots, and several of the mushroom tribe, which these curious people substitute for regular horticultural productions.

I had much difficulty in procuring grass for my horse during the whole way, from Kaling-aung to Yea. He subsisted on little else for

some days than the green leaves of the dwarf bamboo, and a feed of rice in the husk. The bamboos entwined so low and closely overhead, that riding could but rarely be attempted.

*April 1st.*—Marched at six, A.M., temperature of the air, 68°. Advanced over an uneven and jungly country, but more open than the preceding route, crossing in the way many brackish nullahs, or streams, from which I concluded that the sea was about ten or fifteen miles distant. After twelve miles, got into a valley covered with long grass, bearing recent marks of herds of elephants, and tracks of other wild animals.

The parched country seemed now to have been left behind, and we continued our journey under cover of tall shady trees, a great relief at the time. At eleven o'clock, halted on the bank of a broad nullah (no name), which was found by the perambulator to be fourteen miles and a half from our last stage.

*2nd.*—Marched at six, A.M. Temperature of air 66°. After a fatiguing journey of nine miles and a half, over a very rugged country, and then down a defile formed by the Mayí river, we reached Papengwén, (or Papenkwen, meaning a jungly spot cleared by a chief,) which is merely an open space left in the forest.

*3rd.*—At day-light, pushed on; crossed the Wa-chaung, a rapid stream having a rocky bed. At six, A.M., its waters were at a temperature of 70½°, while that of the air was 63°. Winding then down the valley, we had to pass this stream seven times, and descended a rugged pass, and then through a narrow valley, where the Sakhang gyí kyaung, a rapid stream, winds<sup>1</sup>. This had to be crossed five several times. The day becoming very warm, we halted, after walking nine miles and a half, at an old stockade, called Sa Kangí, on the bank of a small stream; some small fry were got out of the pools which the drought had yet left; the water was found to be good. The stockade took fire during the day and was burned down; it was made of bamboos and other very combustible materials, and probably caught fire from some cooking place, as the Burmans were very careless. Went on in the evening three miles further, to Killa kyaung nullah. Next day set off at day-light, with the mercury at 64°. Observed many of that species of tree called Thérén, or Thenyen thí, bearing a nut or bean, used in medicine by the Burmans; it is said to bear a white flower. The red bark of the Chekkha, another tree found here, is used as a febrifuge and as a dye.

A short march of four miles and three quarters brought me to Yea<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> A large town stood formerly at the mouth of this river.

<sup>2</sup> The new boundary of Yea and Tavoy is Pautten kyaung.

This town is the chief, or rather the only one of a province so called. A description has been given of it elsewhere<sup>1</sup>.

I ascended the Yea river until my canoe went aground on a gravelly bottom; here was observed a Karean village. There are several patches of stunted teak-trees on the banks of the river, and also N. W. from Yea.

8th.—Left Yea, and soon entered the interminable jungle. Having passed an outpost, and proceeded five miles (from Yea), we got under such cover as was procurable for the night; no houses or inhabitants appeared; the water was good.

9th.—Set off at day-light. The temperature of the air 66°. Three miles on, found a guard at the most northerly outpost, at the Awein river, where had formerly stood a stockade. The river Awein was nearly dry; the pools remaining in it contained bad water, but by digging in the sand of its bed, good water was obtained. This remark is applicable to all the dry beds of the rivers on this route, which were not affected by the sea. Had to halt at a muddy nullah for several hours, until a bridge was constructed to get my horse across. The Burmans cut down trees on both banks, so as that they fell across the stream; and over these, bamboos and branches being laid, a passage for him was effected. Halted at Papengwen<sup>2</sup>, the distance gone over being eleven miles and a quarter. Still a dense forest.

10th.—Marched at half-past five, A.M. The temperature of the air 69°. Crossed several nullahs, nearly dry. Found the Chekkha tree growing abundantly—it had no flower. Its bark is of a dark reddish colour, like that of cinchona, and possesses considerable astringency; from this last quality, the poorer Burmans use it instead of gambir in the betel masticatory preparation; it is also a dye. Observed several pools of water, where wild ducks, gigantic ciruses, having much red about their heads, and other water fowl, were contending for the scanty supply of fish they contained. Had much difficulty in cutting passages through rattan brakes, which evinced to me that this route had not been travelled over for many years<sup>3</sup>; several of these brakes were two, and even three hundred yards broad. Even after having cleared a path, our clothes were torn to pieces by the long tendrils of the rattans, which have hooked thorns.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. II. p. 264.

<sup>2</sup> The second place of this name.

<sup>3</sup> My Burmans informed me that it had scarcely ever been frequented since the Burman General Taiguan, the Daiwan, or Viceroy, marched over it when sent to attack Junk-ceylon, for the last time, in 1810. On this occasion he had a body of 800 pioneers,

The Burmans come up the deepest nullahs from the sea to catch the Kaboos fish, or Ngayan, with which the pools in this track abound. These they salt and take to Martaban.

Halted at Wekanan Chakhan, after a tedious march of ten miles and a quarter. The greatest heat of the day during these marches, was about 93°. We were obliged to dig for water in the dry bed of a river, first through sand, then a stratum of blue clay, and got some of an indifferent quality at the depth of five feet<sup>1</sup>.

11*h.*—Marched at six o'clock, A.M. The temperature of the air 67°. Had again to halt frequently, to cut passages through rattan brakes. Crossed many nullahs—observed no traces of recent inhabitants, but several paths of the wood-cutters who ascend the Krung kúh river: they float the timber which they cut to the sea; there is no teak in this exact track. It was past eleven o'clock, and we had only got on ten miles and three quarters, but the heat of the sun compelled a halt at a place called Bálamein, which is a broad stream flowing through a high forest. It is only worth noticing as being the boundary betwixt Yea and Martaban.

12*h.*—Thermometer at 69° at sun-rise. Greatest heat during the day, 91°. The porters being fagged, and fever having attacked me and several of my party, we made a short march of four miles and a quarter, and halted at Hné kyaung river, and pitched our bivouac on a fine spot on the bank of the stream. This is one of the best halting places on the route, being in a grove of tall trees; the river is thirty yards wide, and is not affected by the tide as far as could be perceived.

13*h.*—Thermometer at six o'clock, 72°. Passed over a still jungly country, but well supplied with slips of meadow-ground, on which were luxuriant crops of grass; but no human habitation was to be seen. Large herds of wild cattle (bovine), crossed our route; a few musket shots were fired, and a fine cow was brought down; it was in beautiful, sleek, plump condition; the Sepoys and Burmans cut it up in a few minutes, and each took his share, not a very large one however; but the Burmans, who are not fond of cow's flesh, were soon enabled to suit their taste in a better manner, for we had not advanced a couple of hundred yards when the carcass of an elk, yet warm, was found in the middle of the path; it had just been killed by a tiger, and about one-third of it had been devoured. The Sepoys would not touch it, to the great joy of the Burmans, who soon pocketed their shares, and would have done so, had the

<sup>1</sup> This river is termed Klung kron river. Some traces of cultivation having once been employed here appeared. A few jack-trees were observed.

animal died a natural death, and been perfectly game-flavoured. A march, in all, of about eight miles and a half, brought us to Welaup, at some muddy pools, which were so full of fish, that the Burmans killed numbers with their long knives. Good water was procured from a Karean village, about two miles to the eastward; the people ran away on our approach; the outposts of the Siamese army, then lying above Wakrú, saw some of the Sepoys, and fled to the main body. The white crocus-flowered plant, before noticed, was very abundant, and gave some variety to the occasional grassy plains, at this season bare of vegetation. Some traces of cultivation having many years ago been carried on, appeared in this direction.

14th.—Marched nine miles and a half to-day, over a country very similar to the last day's route. Sickness compelled me to have a litter made of bamboos; two Burmans carried me pretty quickly, being relieved by others every half mile. The halting place is on the East bank of the Krung Klok hla river; the water is good; this river is twenty yards wide, and the jungle is very thick, and high all around.

15th.—Marched eight miles and a half across a dry and jungly country, when some small pagodas and a stockade, showed that we were close to Wakru, or Wagru; to this last place, we found it ten miles and seven furlongs from the last halting place. Wakru was formerly a large village enclosed by a stockade, and is said to have been the first place in Martaban province, which was occupied by the Môn race; the Siamese burned it, and carried off the inhabitants, when the Burman and British war had commenced; all was now desolate. A deep river seemed to stop our further progress, and my guides declared that they did not know the road; I immediately directed some old houses to be pulled to pieces, intending to construct a raft to send down the river, and then up to Martaban to procure a guide and supplies, which were becoming scarce; a small reconnoitring party was sent to explore the course towards its mouth. Next day, this doubtful resource was agreeably rendered unnecessary, by my Sepoys having caught several Peguers at a well in the jungle; these poor people had formed part of the inhabitants of Wakru, and had escaped from the Siamese; they said that part of the Siamese army was then in the neighbourhood, close to our route. I did not, however, see any of them, and was not particularly desirous at this time of meeting any of their troops, as I was not aware of their exact feelings towards the British at this period. One of these men became our guide.

19th.—Leaving with joy our hot quarters, for we had neither

trees nor houses to shelter us, our guide led us high up the river, over rugged stony tracks, covered with stunted trees, chiefly balsamic, with broad leaves, and gum-bearing ones. We halted at Krung Kwan hla, a rocky bed of a torrent, coming from a low North and South range of hills.

20th.—A very rugged, stony, and winding route. Crossed many channels of hilly torrents, with pools of brackish water; the country dry, and covered with stunted jungle. The sun being very oppressive, got for shelter into the bed of a narrow rocky ravine, partly shaded by scraggy shrubs. The distance by the road was found to be eleven miles and three furlongs; but, probably, it is only about ten in a direct line.

21st.—The country this day improved much; grassy plains and a fertile soil succeeding the sterility of the tracks previously gone over; here rice cultivation was once extensively carried on before Siamese inroad induced almost a total depopulation of the country on the East bank of the Martaban river. Observed a high wooden monastery on the bank of the Hle chak, a narrow deep stream.

Passing over the plain, large herds of buffaloes were seen, but no villages appeared; the natives let their cattle loose during the dry season, and retire to the towns. At ten miles and four furlongs, reached the temple and monastery, called Chait Sa-pheung hnok; long ago deserted, and in a ruinous condition; and at ten miles five furlongs, we reached Kangí, which must have been a place of note once, for several pagodas and extensive monasteries yet remain; a small lake of pure water reflects these mouldering temples; a large town must have once stood here. This place is, of course, within the British territory; it swarms with small alligators, and fish of a golden colour. The waters of this lake are deemed sacred, and it is said that phials of it were annually conveyed to Amerapúra, for the royal family. Many beautiful alabaster and gilded images of Buddha, were lying or piled in confusion, in the temple which afforded me shelter for the night; this temple stands on wooden posts, over a shallow part of the lake. We had a heavy shower during the night, the first indication of the approaching monsoon.

22nd.—A hot march of fourteen miles, over an open country, having a deep rich soil, but seemingly wholly neglected, brought me at eleven o'clock to a shady grove. The water on the plain is not good, being brackish. Close to the grove was a horde or family of Kareans, who had come from a distance to prepare the fields for rice; they were about 200 in number, of all ages and both sexes; they had built forty low huts on a rising ground, and had thatched them

with grass. I got here, for the first time since leaving Yea, some ducks and fowls. This tribe of Kareans is fair; the women are generally robust, but have delicate skins, and the whole of the little society, unsettled as they appeared, were yet evidently contented, and provided with whatever came within their notions of comfort and luxury; they were, moreover, independent in a great degree, caring little for the Burmans.

23rd.—A march of eight miles over an open country, fit for rice cultivation, during which, a few Karean hamlets, just erected, appeared, brought me to the East bank of the Great Martaban river, and in the evening I had the pleasure to receive there a kind reception from the officers of the 3rd Madras Native Infantry, and the highly desirable aid of a medical person.

The road distances, and those by water, from Tavoy to Martaban, were found as follows :—

|                                                                                                               | Miles. | Fur. |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|------|
| Computed distance by the river from Tavoy to Chea Kaung Stockade, where navigation ceases in the dry season.— |        |      |
| Statute miles, - - - - -                                                                                      | 45     | 0    |
| Hence to Kaling Aung, - - - - -                                                                               | 15     | 3    |
| From Kaling Aung to Yen, - - - - -                                                                            | 61     | 0    |
| From Yen to Wakra Stockade, and River, - - - - -                                                              | 68     | 4    |
| Thence to the bank of the Sankán river, - - - - -                                                             | 54     | 6½   |
| Across it to Martaban, - - - - -                                                                              | 1      | 1½   |
| Total Statute Miles - - -                                                                                     | 245    | 7    |

The stages may seem short, but no one who has not passed through a hilly, rugged, and jungly country, without regular roads, can properly determine what distance ought to form a day's journey.

#### THE MARTABAN RIVERS.

May 26th, 1825.—The monsoon being expected to begin early in the ensuing month, I determined to employ the intermediate time in exploring the branches of the Martaban river. The Aththiyan branch has been casually noticed in the description given in another place of the Seinde daung Ye bú, or hot fountain. This branch has become, since the period I alluded to, of great importance to the British, as it is included in the ceded possessions, and is, besides, the channel by which perhaps the speediest intercourse may be held with the Siamese. It leads to the Phra Sam Chu Pagodas, which are situated in a pass, which may be termed the key to Siam in this direction. It is not, however, navigable so far up, or to within a less distance than three days' journey from the two Pagodas.

The central branch, called Gyein Chaung, demands attention from the fertile but neglected country through which it flows.

The whole of the ceded territory northwards from the first ranges of hills, and from Kangí, is admirably fitted for every species of tropical production. The inhabitants were, when I explored it, chiefly Kareans; but there cannot be a doubt that when old Martaban shall witness its aspiring rival, Amherst Town, on the east bank, crowded with emigrants from all parts of Pegu, the face of the country will assume the cultivated aspect it once bore.

It was necessary for me to keep my movements concealed, for the Burman maywun, Uzina, of Martaban, was stockaded only forty miles from the town, as he might have tried to intercept my party. The preparations, however, which I had to make, disclosed at the least my intention of being longer absent than usual. Upon my return I learned that my movements had been reported in different quarters, and that it was concluded we had been cut off or made prisoners by the enemy.

Only four canoes could be procured for the excursion; these were partly covered in with palm-leaves, and they were capable of containing ten men each; there was hardly space to sit upright below the coverings; one canoe held myself, a sepoy, an interpreter, and five Burman boatmen, with light baggage; another was commanded by the cook; and the remaining two held the baggage, guard of eight sepoys, and my servants. Fifteen days' provisions were put on board the boats.

*May 26th.*—Sailed this afternoon at two o'clock, and was much gratified by the appearance of the country, as we were carried rapidly up by the tide, assisted by expert rowers. Passed several small villages and pagodas, and then the Pegu creek, by which, in the rainy season, boats can descend towards Pegu. This creek is properly a distinct river, from a branch of which a cut or natural canal, termed Kyaup chirré Khyaung, leads to a river, termed Daun wain Khyaung. A large population of Kareans inhabits the banks of the Daun dami Khyaung, the name of the principal or east branch of the Pegu creek. These people cultivate black pepper, indigo, and cotton, and they collect the cardamoms and other products of the woods. Joegabén, on the British side, was once considered the focus of this tribe, but it has been nearly deserted from dread of the Siamese. The people will likely soon return to collect the wax found on the rocky hills there, and to re-assume their other rural occupations.

Passed Joegabén taung, a precipitous limestone rock; the pre-

cipices are streaked red by, perhaps, oxide of iron; on a pinnacle of the rock stands a small white pagoda, visible from Martaban when the sun shines. The height of this rock I judged to be 900 feet.

About sun-set, or after four hours' rowing, we landed at a newly built Karean village, called 'Tunyíncha. The villagers informed me that the ravages which the cholera had made amongst them had urged them to emigrate from a spot higher up the river. This disease, they informed me, had been very long known to them; as they have no medicines of any real efficacy, few survive an attack of it; they trust to incantations. I observed on the ground a sort of labyrinth formed of bamboo twigs, which they said was the magical space within which their patients had to rest while some one, more knowing than his brethren, muttered over him a few incoherent sentences, to drive away the obnoxious demon.

The oldest man in the village said that his age amounted to ninety-five years; but this I could not be assured of, since these poor people do not write, and only mark the lapse of time by accidental changes of abode, or by prominent occurrences in their uneventful history; such as the dread of attacks from the Karjén ní, or red Kareans, who live on the Yunzalen Khyaung, far to the northward—the failure of crops—success in hunting, &c. &c.

Going into one of their huts, I found the family at dinner around a large platter filled with broth, composed of fish, pulse, and roots, and seasoned with salt and chilli. Each person had a dish of rice before him or her, and they all helped themselves to the broth by means of a wooden spoon placed in it. They eat with their fingers when they cannot get the small China-ware spoons used by the Burmans and Peguers. I observed several river turtles, which were kept for the next day's dinner of the fortunate fishers. They train their dogs to search out the various kinds of tortoises which abound in the woods. The barking of the dogs discovers the game to their masters.

27th.—Sailed at mid-day with the tide. Heavy masses of clouds now indicated the breaking up of the fine weather, and just as we got within sight of Shrukla strait, below which the river is broad, a severe squall, with thunder and heavy rain, drove my canoe into the shallows on the left bank. Two boats full of men shot rapidly towards us from the opposite bank. My guards and the other boats being far in the rear, I did not feel quite comfortable, apprehending that these might be some of the Maywun Uzina's people. I had scarcely time to get out my double-barrel, to prevent if possible too close an advance, when they were alongside, and informed me that they were people appointed by the head man of the

Lagun village to guard this pass, in name of the *Engliet*, as they termed us—their services being gratuitous.

The Shrukla is a very narrow strait, formed by the extremity of a range of rugged hills on the east, and a high rock on the west, termed Sagat taung. Something resembling an inscription on the face of the rock attracted my attention, and I was now in hope of finding a clue to the ancient history of the country. But I was disappointed, for, on landing, the appearance was found to arise from a number of minute and gilded earthenware idols, arranged in rows on ledges cut into the face of the rock. I cannot here refrain from expressing my doubts of the existence of any written documents or inscriptions of much value to the antiquarian, or even historian, amongst the Indo Chinese nations. Their literature was borrowed, and they had no indigenous character, in so far as research has yet enabled us to judge of, by which to transmit their *earliest* deeds to posterity. Dr. Leyden was of opinion that ancient inscriptions exist, but he was not so fortunate as to be supplied with facts to support the opinion, while the term ancient is often a relative one, and ought, as far as Ava and Pegu are concerned, to have reference to periods antecedent to the introduction of Buddhism to these countries.

The Burman inscriptions found in Martaban are in the Pali, or else in the proper Burman character, and they are very rarely found on stone. Their great bells are covered with descriptions of the periods when they were cast, and the pious individuals by whom they were consecrated, and hung up in the courts of the temples<sup>1</sup>. The only inscription deserving of notice, which fell within my observation, is the comparatively recent one which commemorates the actions of the renowned Along Phra or Alompra. It was extant on a fine white marble slab, four feet four inches high, three feet four inches broad, and five inches thick, which that conqueror placed in the court of the ancient Shái Madu pagoda at Pegu. It was protected

<sup>1</sup> The embassy to Ava in 1826-7, discovered "no less than sixty inscriptions on sandstone at Pagan, where are the ruins of the ancient capital of that name, and including Sakaing and other places, in all not less than 330; and the king had collected at the great Arracan temple, near Amerapoora, from various parts of the country, no less than 260 such monuments. A few of these are on fine white marble, but the greater number are on sandstone. These stones resemble those placed at the heads of graves in England. Some of the inscriptions are in the round Bali character, and others in the Burman, but most in the former. They all contain dates, and generally the name of the reigning king, with references to some historical event. But the chief object is to commemorate the founding of some temple or monastery."—*Journal of Science and Arts*, &c.

by a shed from the weather, and looked as fresh as if it had been but very recently erected.

The hurried nature of my visit to Pegu prevented me taking a complete copy of this record. My interpreter read it over in my presence, from which I learned that it contains a long religious preface; after which it records that Nemiyu Dumre Chaung yaung Pherúf (*i. e.* Alompra) repaired the great temple, hung up bells, and performed other pious actions. And that, to commemorate these deeds, "this stone has been set up on the 14th day of the month Thakú, in the year 1155" [A.D. 1793].

The materials of which the public edifices amongst the Indo Chinese nations are almost invariably constructed, are of a perishable nature. They are of soft, friable stone, or of brick and mortar and wood. The bricks are badly cemented, sometimes with mud only; and when they use lime it is also badly mixed up. Inscriptions cannot, therefore, be looked for on such buildings. The practice of burning the dead renders the Buddhists indifferent to the erection of stone monuments over tombs. The Chinese ideas on the latter subject may be considered an exception, as they raise expensive stone monuments, covered with epitaphs, over the remains of their relatives and great men. But the Chinese are not real Buddhists, for their minds are imbued with superstitions which they derived from a different fountain than that from which the dogmas of Fo, Pho, or their Buddha, flowed to them.

My disappointment in not finding the expected inscription at Sagat taung was in some degree compensated for by the discovery of a grand cave in that rocky hill. It is evidently a natural one, for no pillars have been left to support the roof, and the process by which it was probably hollowed out seems yet slowly going on—a gradual decay in the rock, which is principally composed of limestone, of primary formation, apparently.

This cave is 240 feet in depth, by an average breadth of fifty feet; its height varies from twenty to thirty feet. Attached to the walls and roof are massy concretions of calcareous spar; several large brick images, plastered over and representing Buddha, stand at the door, and a multitude of alabaster, and almost wholly decayed lesser images of the same deified mortal, stand along the bottom at the sides of the cave, and in recesses in the different parts of the rock. It was impossible to continue above a few minutes at a time in this cave, owing to the stench arising from the soil of bats, which lay a foot thick on most parts of the floor.

I could not obtain any satisfactory account of this cave from

several priests whom I met at Lagun village, lying just opposite. These were Burman, not Pegu priests, which accounts for their ignorance. I could not help reflecting on the want of imagination shown in the decoration of this cave. Here the living marble was bared to the sculptor's chisel, so that, with little more labour than he had to bestow in framing the detached statues, he might have peopled the cave with giant deities.

Having satisfied curiosity, we pushed up the river, but at a slower rate than usual, for the tide had hardly any influence at this distance from the sea; the boats kept close along the west bank; we passed several islands, and soon landed for an hour at a Karean village on the east bank. The people were bartering their coarse cloth, tobacco, and cotton, for the rice, china-ware, and petty articles of trade which had arrived in a large Martaban boat. On asking for some fowls, at the usual price, the alarm spread amongst the women, who tried to catch their favourite "matrons of the roost;" the men placed rows of nooses on the ground, and then drove the poultry towards them; by this plan, in a few minutes, a sufficient number were snared by the legs. I would recommend this expeditious method to a traveller in some parts of India, where he will find it no easy task sometimes to catch a fowl for his dinner. They asked six rupees for a dozen of fowls, which is about thrice the rate which they may be bought for at Penang; but it was a cheap rate compared with that to which we had been accustomed at Rangoon, where, during the war, one fowl has been known to sell for fifteen rupees. The houses of the villagers were high and comfortable; in one of them I observed the mistress and family busied in distilling a spirit from rice.

Taking to our boats, we rowed on; passed several hamlets and ruined pagodas, and then, but not without the utmost exertion of the crews, rounded a rocky point. Went up betwixt the long and fertile island of Ká Thá and the east bank; and, passing some villages, arrived, at four o'clock, P. M., at the chief village of the island. It is called Ká Thá Yuwa. It was a festival day, and the inhabitants of the village, with those of the neighbouring hamlets, were assembled to perform the ceremonies enjoined by their religion. All were gaily dressed, some expensively, in silks.

The mixture which I observed of Món and Karean dresses in several Karean families, was found, upon inquiry, to be owing to several members only of these families having adopted the religion of Buddha, and to the intermarriages which had taken place betwixt the two tribes. Generally it appeared that the Karean women,

whether converts or otherwise, adhered to their own fashions in dress, alleging that the lower garments of the Burman and Peguan fair are not only unbecoming, but indecorous. These assertions are, unluckily, too true.

There was only one priest in the village; he was comfortably lodged and fed. A small cone, about ten feet high, served for a pagoda; opposite to which was a bamboo stage, decorated with flags and burning tapers. The heads of families, as they arrived in small canoes, left the devotional duties to their wives and children; these they gravely performed, although manifestly both alarmed and surprised on seeing me and the Sepoys—beings of whom they had hitherto no idea but that conveyed by report. I could perceive that the moment the women had repeated the confession of faith, and affixed the waxen tapers to the pagoda, the men hurried them off to their canoes. Women are not permitted to touch an image of Buddha.

In the evening an old man led off a party of youths (who had been displaying their agility in a theatrical dance) towards the small pagoda. He sung a solemn song, and danced in slow measure around both the pagoda and stage, followed in succession by his train.

The chief products of this island are cotton, indigo, hemp, and tobacco. But the cultivation is carried on in the most slovenly manner, sharp stakes supplying the want of spades, and thorns of the harrow. Castor, pulse, and yams are also raised.

On the bank opposite to the town were seen the remains of a Siamese stockade, which had been occupied several months before. The people did not complain of any harshness on the part of the Siamese towards them. I can easily account for this lenity; the Siamese know by experience that the Kareans are the only people they have to rely on for certain supplies required while on their expeditions, and that they are a neutral people.

A high rock, termed *Míchan taung*, lies close in front of *Ká Thá*, and on the opposite bank of that part of the river. An account of it has been given in another chapter. It is rugged and of difficult ascent. The rock is chiefly a black limestone. It looks as if volcanic fires had scorched it, and in walking up its rugged surface the tread is succeeded by a hollow sound. Here and there are apertures, or natural wells, of considerable depth, with stalactites projecting from their inner surfaces. Descending with an excellent appetite, sharpened by the bleak air on the summit of *Míchan taung*, breakfast was speedily discussed, and the boats were cast off at eleven

o'clock. Heavy showers announced that the monsoon was at hand; the boatmen never complained of the wetting they got, either at this time or during almost every successive day and night until our return. Put in at several villages, and observed the women busily engaged in dyeing thread, and in weaving; red, blue, and yellow are the favourite colours. Passed several rocky hills, and at half-past two o'clock a high sandbank on the right, where some river-turtles' eggs were procured.

The banks of the river are now wilder, clothed alternately with long grass and jungle; took an hour to row past Utang Ryun, a large narrow island, yielding the same products as Ká Thá; about sun-set anchored under a high bank on the east side; here we found a large Martaban boat full of petty merchandise. Heavy rain fell during the night.

29th.—Cast off at six, A. M. Breakfasted at Shúíken, a Karean village of ten huts; obtained a further supply of fowls; cotton is here the principal article cultivated. Cast off again, and rowed up the left bank; torrents of rain fell, and greatly pitied the Burmans, who had no shelter but their broad-brimmed matted caps. Many boats had been observed going down the river, and, on inquiry, their crews tried to persuade us that the late maywun of Martaban's parties had forced them to fly. We did not see any of these parties, but I did not feel quite secure when we were obliged, by the nature of the river, to bivouac on the west side of the river; for, crowded as my party was in the canoes and under a high bank, we were much exposed to be surprised and cut off in the night, had the enemy really been in the direction of our route. An extensive sandbank on the left, which we reached about one o'clock, enabled me to ascertain pretty nearly the rate at which we had been rowing, and were likely to row. This was done by taking the perambulator on shore, and rowing the boats against it and time.

Against the current, the rate was four miles an hour, throwing out a fraction of 260 yards, to make up for accidental stronger currents. Down the stream the rate was found to be seven miles 220 yards. Had the boats been fully manned, perhaps five miles per hour ascending, and eight, or even nine descending, might have been relied on as the rates. The sand bank was found to be the resort of multitudes of river turtles, which lay their eggs in it.

The river is here divided by a very extensive island, called Thá lúng-sún. We took the East channel, both in ascending and in returning, the other being represented as least frequented, and as being very rapid; had not leisure to ascertain the truth. This

channel is termed Jilur Khyauug; that which we took is broad, perhaps 200 yards across, with occasionally high banks. Observed several deserted villages, where we obtained a few unripe plantains and other fruits. Passed several rocks in the river's bed, and at half-past five o'clock anchored under a high bank on the west shore. Here we had just time to cook and despatch dinner, when the monsoon burst with torrents of rain; the Burmans scooped out holes for themselves in the soft bank, and housed for the night.

30th.—Cast off at day-light. Breakfasted at Kyapúng, a Karean village, a quarter of a mile from the East bank. Here, observed many teak-trees, and was informed that we were now in the line of the teak-forest. They have been considerably thinned no doubt. Here again we found a Martaban boat, bartering rice, salt, chillies, raw sugar, balachong, and china ware, &c., for cotton cloths, raw cotton, wax, and tobacco.

Passed up the river, and had, during the day, to force our way against several very strong eddies and rapids. At twenty minutes past two o'clock, cleared *Thá-lúg-sún* island, and found a fine expanse of water. Got with difficulty past a small rocky island, along which strong currents opposed us, and soon came in sight of the large stockade of *Thá Kayet*, of which I had not previously had any precise information. The suddenness with which we came within gun-shot of it, was rather startling, considering the smallness of our party. The rowers instinctively lay on their oars, and I examined the place with my glass, but could not perceive any sign that it was occupied. Although aware that this last circumstance does not always, in Burma, indicate an evacuated fortress, yet I made the people advance along the bank, opposite to the stockade, to induce any of the enemy who might be inside, to salute us with a few shots, as is their general custom, so that we should be able to effect our retreat in case they were too numerous for us to oppose. Having met with no interruption, we crossed and found the place unoccupied. This branch of the river (here divided by the island *Thá Kayet*), is about 200 yards wide. This hold lies on, or covers an angle formed by the junction of the rivers *Yúnzalen* and *Hólá*. The Móns term this last *Jalo-én*. The stockade is an oblong of 190 yards by 87 yards, and is constructed of trunks of trees, firmly sunk in the ground, ten feet being their height above the surface; these are firmly united by cross-beams; a bamboo stage inside supplies the place of a regular banquettes; outside are the usual stakes and palisadoes; a deep ditch defends it on the land-side; it was partly dry.

The gateway had been burned down (as I was afterwards informed) by the Siamese, who had stormed and carried this post about the period when the British troops took Martaban. The garrison, it seems, consisted of 300 Burmans and Móns, who made scarcely any defence; they were taken prisoners, and sent to Siam. If they relied on such means of defence as were found in the place by my party, the success of the Siamese cannot be a matter of surprise, even although (as it is affirmed) they, having arrived by land, had to swim across the river to the attack. All along the banquettes were baskets containing large rounded pebbles, as large as apples, to be hurled at assailants. An old house, which had once been a priest's, was the only shelter the place afforded; it was open all around, and allowed the rain to beat in, which it did so violently as to drive me to the cover of my canoe.

I was now puzzled which route to pursue; my Burmans had never been here before, and could not inform me which was the main river. We were subsequently, on our returning passage, enabled to detain several canoes, rowed by Kareans, who were descending the Yünzillen river, and from whom I received information of some consequence. They said that two days higher up was a stockaded post, termed Yúnzillen, or Iúnzillún, then occupied by five hundred of the Kayen-ní savages, or red Kareans, who had adhered to the maiwún of Martaban, and that the Yúnzillen river has its source in the Haphun range of hills, which also gives birth to the Sittang [Chetaung] river. These appeared to me to be the same as the range which I observed from the Shúi Madu Pagoda in Pegu to bear as follows,—the northern extremity NNE., the southern extremity E., half point south. They supposed that the Húlú river comes from China; it was therefore necessary to explore both: and as the Húlú was so rapid and muddy as to induce a belief that it arose in the high hills near at hand, while the Yünzillen was clear and deep, seeming to indicate a long course, I chose the latter for the next day's voyage.

*May 31st.*—Set off at five, A.M., but had scarcely rowed, against a strong current, above three hours, when further progress was prevented by a rocky rapid in which our boats were nearly upset, and at last grounded in a shallow. It was evident to me that this was not the main river, so we returned with all speed to Kákayet; here having breakfasted, we again got under way at eleven, A.M., and rowed up the Húlú river.

On clearing Kákayet island, the river was found to be about two hundred yards broad, and from four to five fathoms deep;

but as late rains had somewhat swollen the current, the average depth in general will be less. A low rocky island lies across the river above Kákayet; my boatmen tried to advance, but could not round it, owing to the violence of the current; I therefore landed on it, to observe the appearance of the river on its other side; it was found full of rocks and rapids, and could be traced to where (only at the distance of about 300 yards from us) it rushes impetuously out of a gorge in one of those inferior ranges which run parallel to the great north and south range.

I now urged my boatmen to come round to where I was, that we might make one attempt more to get on; but this was rendered unnecessary by the information I presently obtained from some Kareans, whose canoes shot like shuttles towards us from the gorge; they tried to pass and escape from us, but threats and promises combined brought them to the bank. From them I learned that the Hólú or great Martaban river, (called San-lín lower down,) rises beyond Che-ung Mai; that it is not navigable to canoes above a day or two higher up than where we then were; that a passage can be attempted only in the dry season, when the rapidity of the current abates, and admits canoes to glide through the passages amongst the rocks; that a Laos or Siamese stockade stands about eight or ten days higher up, and on or not far from its east bank; and that Yein-bein forms the boundary betwixt Laos and Ava. They added, that they had gone to cut bamboos, intending to float them down in the shape of rafts, but that they had been obliged, by the strength of the current, and the eddies amongst the rocks, to leave their work unfinished, and escape. The intelligence got from these people was afterwards confirmed by natives of Che-ung Mai. I am therefore convinced that the Martaban river takes its rise to the northward of Che-ung Mai, and that its course south to Kákayet lies in a valley formed by two of the inferior ranges of the great north and south belt, called by the Laos, Dawe Súthep.

There was now no prospect of acquiring further information regarding the country we were in; we had passed the inhabited tracts, and all was forest and mountain before us. The boats were put under way down the channel, on the east side of Kákayet island, and after eighteen hours' brisk rowing, favoured by a rapid current, (exclusive of halts,) we reached Martaban. Upon the whole this river maintains a grand and picturesque character, from its embouchure to the gorge in the hills, from which it pours forth into the plain, a distance of about 130 miles; the water-distance is perhaps 140 miles.

## VISIT TO SEINLE DAUNG HOT WELL.

THE Burmans having reported the existence of a hot fountain on the banks of the Atthiyan river, a party was collected, and a small guard of Sepoys was held ready; these being embarked in native boats, we set off rapidly, with the tide in our favour<sup>1</sup>.

This fountain has been already described by me, and therefore it will here be only briefly noticed. We reached the Atthiyan stockade, situated on the east bank, and about fifty miles from Martaban. After having breakfasted under a tree, we proceeded through a deep swamp, covered with tall reeds and grass, towards the well; it was found in the centre of an old cocoa-nut grove, which had once shaded a considerable village. The fountain is a circle of about thirty feet in diameter, and of great depth; unfortunately we had no line at hand to sound, having expected to see a hot spring only; but the rocks could be distinctly seen jutting out of the sides at a depth of twenty feet perhaps; the heat of the water is 136° of Fahrenheit. From experiments made, the water is a chalybeate, with lime and some other earth in combination; the rock is evidently a limestone.

The Atthiyan or Attaram river is deep and narrow, and winds considerably. On its north bank we noticed a very singular rock of compact gray limestone, which is called Phabaptaung; it is completely perforated.

## THE PROVINCES NORTHWARD FROM MARTABAN.

THE country stretching from Pegu to Martaban, and also that in the direction of Taungu, can scarcely be travelled over in the monsoon, both being deeply flooded.

In going from Pegu to Martaban, the traveller either proceeds by water along the coast to the Chetaung (or Sittang) river, and thence over land by the towns Dibi, Kamapa, and Kamana; or he sails up the San-luen river, and entering the Daung-damí, a tributary to the main river, which it joins at Mahí Phra Pagoda, is carried to a spot where a natural duct or canal leads off to the north. This canal is called Chakat-chaung, and it joins the Daung-wein-chaung at a distance from the Daung damí of about one day's sailing. This cut is, however, only practicable in the rainy season. There is also

<sup>1</sup> Lieut. George, 13th M.N.I., and Mr. Adams, commanding a gun-brig, favoured me with their company on this occasion.

a cut, or natural channel, leading from the Chetaung to the Pegu river (or Hongsawaddy-chaung). This I noted while sailing up the latter.

The proper route to Ava from Martaban is the same, so far as to the Chetaung river, as the route to Pegu.

I will here describe the whole route, as reported to me by the Burmans and Shans. The first place of any note, after leaving Martaban, is Jenkyeit (or Thenjeit). It is chiefly inhabited by Móns, (or Peguers,) and may contain, villages included, about 2,500 souls. Much salt is prepared here, and there are extensive plains in its vicinity, visible from Martaban hill, which are under rice cultivation. There is a famous pagoda on the summit of a hill, of the same name as the town; the hill is visible from the sea, and may be 3500 feet high; the town is not fortified. The Martaban maiwún, or governor, intrenched himself about two marches to the NW. of this place during the late war; and here he was enabled to overawe the population, from the command he possessed over all the creeks and rivers in this direction. To this it was owing, that the British force stationed in Martaban had scarcely any control beyond the gates of that town, on the north bank of the San-luen.

Sathaum-myu is the next stage to Jenkyeit; it possesses some decayed brick fences, having been originally the seat of an independent Peguan chief; there are few inhabitants here.

Daung-wan, at the next stage, is a town defended, it is reported, by a brick wall; it stands on a rising ground. Passing onwards, the next town is Wen-kalot-rowa, containing, it is said, 1500 souls. Next to it is Tait-killá, "white man's factory." The cause of its having this name was not explained to me; it lies on the Kadé-chaung, a small stream; the low hill above the town is surmounted by a brick defence; the population of the district is reckoned at 2500 souls. This town is about three hours' rowing from the sea, and large boats can ply up to it; the produce consists of rice, pepper, arecas, cardamoms, salt, and fruits; they salt fish, (preserved for the purpose in ponds,) and export it to Martaban and other places: it is of the kaboos species, which is highly relished by the Burmans and Peguers. Tait-killá is the frontier district of Martaban on the west coast, and is bounded by the Chetaung river.

Chetaung, or Sittang, is a town on the river of that name, and is situated on the east bank, and about one tide, or thirty miles, from the embouchure of the river; behind it lies a hill, surmounted by a pagoda; the town contains about 300 souls only; the river has a bar, over which sometimes a dangerous bore rushes; boats of four

coyans' burden<sup>1</sup> can reach the town, but small boats only can proceed higher. From this circumstance travellers prefer the regular land route.

Above Chetaung, and next in order, lies Kyaum Pagú, on the north bank of a small tributary to the main river, and bearing the name of the town; eastward of it is Kyaum Pagú-taung, a hill with pagodas. Ten hours more bring the traveller to the stockaded village Shúígyén (Myú), adorned with pagodas; most of the houses lie outside of the stockade; it is the chief town of a district of the same name, and both are computed together to contain 15,000 souls; being a mixture of Burmans, Peguers, and Plauu (the Tongsu of the Burmans); the produce of the district consists of rice, ivory, wax, and other Martaban productions. Five hours further bring us to San-chei, a small place on a stream of that name, which joins the Chetaung river. One day higher up lies Kyaup Kímyú, defended by a small stockade; the town is reckoned to contain 2000 souls; and it sends to the Burman marts rice, ivory, and betel-nut; cattle (bovine and buffaloes) are numerous.

The traveller crosses, at about four hours' distance from Kyaupkí, another tributary to the Chetaung river, which is termed Maum-kyaum; thence passing the village Maum-rowa, lying on its bank, he reaches, after about eight hours' march, the village of Baung-madí. Hence a journey of ten hours brings him to the fortified town Taungú, hitherto the boast of Burman engineers; the British army had no opportunity of judging of its merits, as the detachment sent against it returned before having reached it, owing to want of provisions; whatever its real strength may be, every Burman I have conversed with agreed in representing the inhabitants to be the most demoralized and lawless class in the empire.

The country around Taungú is reported to be open; in a Burman chart of the province, procured by me, the town is laid down in the angle formed by the separation of the river into two branches, and about one day above the precise point of junction; the north-east branch is called Sapta Kyaum, and sometimes Sada Kyaum, and it rises in the Chen-daung, or "Elephant mountains," where it is fabled to proceed by two streams from the head and trunk of an elephant; the western branch, termed Cheusé-kyaum, flows from the same hills; the sources of both branches are close to each other.

Leaving Taungú, the traveller passes, during five consecutive

<sup>1</sup> A coyan is 5323 lbs., and is a Malayan or Straits measure.

marches, the towns of Myúlayé and Chenyéyc, when he reaches Yamesén, a town containing about 550 houses, and 2700 souls. This district yields cotton, tobacco, wax, and ivory; cattle and poultry are plentiful.

From Yamesén a path leads off in a NNE. direction towards the province called Plaau by the natives, or Tongsú-myú by the Burmans. Beyond Yamesén, on the Ava road, is Mithila, and about sixteen hours distant; ten hours further bring the traveller to Shúigyén; hence there are two routes to the capital; that which leads NE. conducts him in about twelve hours to Penya Shúí-che-gong-phra, a famous pagoda at Ava; the other, leading north-westerly, takes the traveller in a circuitous direction past the towns of Pha-lé-byein and Paup-myein-myú, and conducts him to Rinní-aum-myen, close to the capital. There is much jungle throughout this route; here and there a grassy plain may be crossed, and cultivation in patches may be observed; an express could perhaps be conveyed from Martaban to Amerapoora by this route in as short a time as one of our Indian dawks or posts could convey it over the same space. The Burmans use horse posts on important occasions; Dorians are thus conveyed to the golden feet, and it is a fruit which can scarcely be kept more than eight days in a sound state. An incumbered army could hardly accomplish this march within two months.

Returning to Yamasén, it will be found that a road leads off to other districts on its NNE. quarter. Three days' journey in that direction brings the caravan to Taungla, having about as large a population as Yamesén; it lies on a low hill, and is not provided with defences; small horses are here bred; rice, poultry, and vegetables are plentiful. Several days beyond this place is Enlewa, the chief town of a district so called; both together contain, according to Shaan estimates, 10,000 souls. The town is placed on an island in the midst of a lake about a mile wide; this reservoir is formed by a small stream descending from the adjacent hills on the east; it overflows in the rainy season, and it abounds in fish. The inhabitants consist of the three races before noticed as forming the population of Shúigyén-myú. They carry the produce of the district on bullocks down to Rangoon or to Ava; it consists of rice, wax, stick-lac, jaggery, raw silk, coarse pickled tea, (the leaf of which, according to one given to me in a dry but not shrivelled state, is about four inches long and one and a-quarter broad, and the shrub which produces it eight or ten feet high,) and cotton. They manufacture coarse blue and chequered cotton stuffs, dyeing them with the indigo

growing in the country; earth nuts (*arachis hypogæa* of Marsden), and various kinds of medicinal barks and roots, are also articles of barter. They make small japanned wares, for which manufacture their forests supply gums and resins. They have no salt, and depend for their yearly supply, as perhaps do all the people of the regions to the north and north-east of Pegu, on the salt manufactories of the Peguan coast; the Burman government and its subjects take full advantage of this circumstance, the traffic or barter of this cheaply-manufactured commodity being greatly in their favour. Eight days beyond Eulewa, in the same direction as before stated, is Benyen, with a population of about 2000 souls; the route is very jungly. Several days further on is the town of Thaumpé, situated in a province or district of the same name; the Burmans conquered it, and annexed it to their possessions under the title of Taungsú Myú.

With such information only as could be obtained, it were impossible to fix accurately the site of this town; but I am inclined to assign it to about the 19th degree of north latitude: it appears to be about 30 miles west from the Siamese hilly boundary. The natives call themselves Plaau, and are a very distinct race from the Burmans or Siamese; they differ in feature, language, and in character, and also in physical construction, from both of these nations.

The men of this tribe are inferior in stature and strength to the Burmans, who again fall generally below the Peguers and Kareans, in these particulars. The tribes inhabiting the N.E. borders of the Ava territory, of which this seems one, are chiefly known to the British under the denomination of Shaans, and they made themselves very conspicuous during the latter part of the war, when ranged under Amazonian leaders<sup>1</sup>.

The statures of five Plaau, who were measured by me, were as follow:—

|                  |   |   |   |   | Ft. | In. |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|
| The tallest,     | - | - | - | - | 5   | 7   |
| Second,          | - | - | - | - | 5   | 6   |
| Third, -         | - | - | - | - | 5   | 2   |
| Fourth and fifth | { | - | - | - | 5   | 1   |
|                  |   | - | - | - | 5   | 1   |

The average being five feet and three inches, omitting the fraction. They more resemble in countenance the Chinese, than any other

<sup>1</sup> One of these Amazons was killed in an attack on their Stockade. The second is also supposed to have been shot or killed, by the bursting of a shell, while she was being carried across a river.

people in this quarter of the east; their dress partakes also of the Chinese costume, consisting of a short jacket and wide trousers; the jacket doubles across the breast and is fastened with tape; it is either plain or quilted. They twist their hair into a knot with a handkerchief, like the Burmans, or twist it plain, or they bind it like a fillet around their heads; they tattoo their bodies like the Burmans and Laos, but less deeply and extensively; and they keep the lobes of their ears distended by thrusting rolls of silver or bits of polished wood through the holes which have been bored in them. This last is a Burman custom also, and may have been introduced from India along with their religion; it is generally found to be less prevalent beyond the eastern frontier of Ava, than within it; but the Laos have adopted the practice, and exhibit it in all its deformity. That it was imported with their religion is rendered most probable from the fact of Burman Búddhist images having unnaturally distended ears; the statuary following, in this instance, the framer of the Jain colossal statues of the same deified mortal, which are found in Kanara and in Mysore. When a Burman happens not to have a neat stopper, he thrusts a flower, a roll of paper, or even a half-smoked cigar into the aperture.

The climate is, at times, cool enough, in the Taungsú country, to render quilted jackets comfortable; a good one costs about ten ticals. The women wear close dresses, but no opportunity of seeing them offered. The Plaau are, as far as could be judged of, a simple lively people, much attached to agriculture, and, by their own confession, little disposed for war.

As they have no written language of their own, but make use of the Burman character, it would be perhaps impossible to trace their history. They are, in some degree, connected with the other tribes which are scattered over the wilder parts of the Burman empire, and who distinctly, as far as my own experience goes, claim to be the aboriginal races. They have seldom failed, when fitting occasions happened, to seek and maintain a wild degree of independence in the depths of the forest. The Plaau burn their dead, a consequence of their conversion to Búddhism; they do not, however, implicitly subscribe to Burman customs; thus for instance, their marriage ceremonies differ from those of Ava. Women are not here immured as in Hindústan; young men pay their addresses in person to the fair, and when the lover fancies that he observes symptoms of his suit prevailing, he takes an opportunity of placing his silver bracelet (one only being generally worn by the males) before her; if she takes it up, he is rendered happy, and immediately refers his suit

to her parents ; the approbation of the parents is the prelude to a feast, the prominent viands of which consist of buffalo and cow beef, venison, and other game, the flesh of monkeys, poultry, and bandicoots. The festivities are prolonged according to the wealth of the parties, and they daily conclude with deep potations of arrack and rice beer ; opium, that bane to happiness when over indulged in, is hardly known to these people, except through their intercourse with Chinese traders.

Marriage being here a mere civil contract, the attendance of a priest is not required to confirm it ; but were the case otherwise, as might be suspected it had been, from the invocations of superior powers now used at the ceremony, the priest could not, consistently, be a Phúngie or Búddhist one, since his religion would forbid him from conversing with or even looking at a woman, or from being present in her company. An elder of the village society attends instead of a parson ; he gives a cup of rice wine to each of the parties, repeating at the same time certain invocations of benignant devattas, to prove propitious ; they drink the wine, after which, the elder binds one arm of the man to an arm of the woman, and the marriage is completed.

The women are chiefly employed, when in the house, at the loom ; but they work 'moderately in the fields, when required. Slavery does not exist, although it is believed that an individual may sell his services for a given period.

Their music is rude, the instruments consisting of gongs, cymbals, drums, and a sort of flute. They sing with a better grace than the Burmans and Peguers, and with hat in hand ; two vocalists of this description, who exhibited at my request, flourished about their mat hats, of two feet in diameter ; these hats are small, compared with the Burman jappanned paper ones, which would render a quaker's quite unfashionable, since some of them are four feet five inches in diameter, serving the double purpose of hat and umbrella.

The province is governed by a Burman Maiwún, and justice is, of course, administered according to Burman law. The town is protected by a stockade, and is rated to contain 5000 souls. Rice is grown in sufficient quantity for the use of the population ; a few buffaloes are kept for agricultural purposes ; they are smaller it is said than the breeds further south ; other cattle are abundant, and small horses are bred for sale. The general products are rice, raw cotton, coarse cotton stuffs, some of which are of the nankeen yellow cotton, which grows here ; tea, coarse paper, and silk, the pro-

duce of a worm which is fed upon the poja leaf. Ivory is not procured here; gold is collected in small quantities from the beds of rivulets, especially in the bed of the Paung-laung-chaung; lead is extracted from pits dug in the hilly tracts, but lateral tunnels are rarely cut to any great distance; the matrix of the ore has not been ascertained; these mines, it is said, supply Ava with most of the lead used in war. Tin is found in the shape of a black oxide, or stream ore, thus showing its connexion, perhaps, with the extensive formations of that metal in Tennasserim; it is valued in the district where it is mined, at about twenty-five or thirty ticals the tubeesa, which rate will correspond with one of from eleven to thirteen rupees per China picul<sup>1</sup>, being about one-fourth or one-third less, respectively, than its value on the coast. It has been hitherto generally supposed that the tin formation, so continuous throughout the Malacca Peninsula and Tennasserim, terminates about 15° north latitude, and it does appear that an interruption takes place to its continuity, north of the Tavoy mines, if we are to take native accounts only as guides. But as the country which intervenes betwixt Tavoy and Thaumpé, towards the hills, is wild in the extreme, and only inhabited by savage tribes, it is evident that we cannot possess any authentic accounts of its mineralogical peculiarities. Iron ore is abundant, and it is smelted in order that swords, knives, and other articles may be manufactured. They have no mines of precious stones, if the natives are to be credited; the latter informed me that the district producing such, lies still further north; this agrees with the account given in the "*Mission to Ava*" of the mines whence the Ava precious stones are extracted; it is there stated that they are brought from Mo-gaot and Kyatpyan, about five days' journey from Ava, in a direction E.S.E. Lime is abundant in Thaumpé. They import salt and spices. The Sapan tree abounds, but is too far from the coast to be of any value as an export, since there are no navigable rivers by which it can be floated to the sea.

The houses are built of strong posts, beams, and bamboo mats.

In the note below will be found some names of fruits and woods, the species of most of which have not been ascertained, specimens not being procurable<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> One hundred and thirty-three pounds and one-third.

<sup>2</sup> Rang—a thorny tree.

Maká—a tree, the bark of which is used to dye yellow.

Lac—the red dye.

Maikham and Mai—indigo.

The people manufacture gunpowder. They trade by caravans, with Rangoon, to the extent, it is reported, of more than an Indian lac of ticals annually (or 100,000). They import salt, areca nuts, balachong, or caviare; salt fish, coarse broad cloths and woollens, spices, crockery, and piece goods.

Traders from some of the frontier districts of China, make periodical visits to the Rangoon port; they convey their merchandise on mules and horses; a caravan sometimes will amount to one thousand persons, who go well armed, and have generally their families with them; they bring cotton, cloth, silks, coarse paper, woollens, paints, cutlery, steatite, and other Chinese products. Nutmegs and cloves have been found amongst their wares. These must have traversed the extensive regions of China and Yunnan, before reaching these traders. The rains are less abundant in Thaumpé than in Pegu; the cultivator uses the buffalo for the plough, and employs also the harrow and spade; the system of transplanting the rice-plants is here practised.

The Ava weights and measures here obtain. They can scarcely be said to have any regular coinage; I obtained some of their conical silver coins. These are of different denominations of value, and contain about twenty-five per cent. of alloy, like Burman ticals. The Burmans supply the Thaumpé with muskets; they use swords, spears, bows, and knives.

By their own accounts, the country could furnish 5000 fighting men, which would admit of an estimate of about 30,000 souls for the total population.

The Thaumpé language approaches closer to that of the Siamese than to the Burman, so that the Peguers confound the tribe which speaks it, with the Siamese race and the Laos. It is monosyllabic, like the Indo-Chinese dialects in general.

Mokmán—a small fruit growing on a shrub, ten feet or so in height.

Maukliska—a sweet round fruit, about the size of an apple.

Mokman—a fruit having a thick rind, about the size of a bean.

T'aphyúra—an acid fruit.

Maukman—a sweet large subacid fruit.

Thapan—a long sweet fruit.

Maklot—fruit of a creeping plant.

Maklang—the jack.

Mapha—a low thorny shrub, bearing fruit.

Tekyo—the varnish gum.

Castor, ginger, belleric, emblic, sesame, are common.

Torches are prepared of light resinous wood.

Saltpetre is imported from Siam.

## SPECIMEN OF THE THAUMPE, or SHAAN LANGUAGE.

Khún hím, the king's house.

Lú haú, a good man, where the adjective follows the noun; *lú* is a Chinese word.

Sí kai nga, a bad horse.—Nam daba lúm hau, better than all.

(The pronoun precedes the verb, and the verb the substantive).

Koei láe, I go.—Loei am dén, I eat rice.

Pashú kainga, he [is] wicked.

Koei lu tau or [tillutau], I [am] not pleased.

Koei sí tau, I don't know, or, I know not.

Loei runga, we will proceed.—Tam ngam mun, do not fear.

Yí lun la-shen-taba, bring a sword.

Am dén or, amta dén, to eat rice.

Au, is.—Tayá, this.—Kampha, world.

Mu, the sun.—La, the moon.—Tang, north.

Naau, south.—Muí khan, east.—Muí nu, west.—Klon, island.

Kong, hill.—Me, fire.—Thí, water.—Panglai, the sea.—Nam, body.

Me nga trí, countenance.—Mé, eye.—Pú, a bull.—Sí, a horse.

Chang [Siamese], an elephant.—Ta, fish.

Kham, gold.—Rán, silver.—Rík, tin.—Kyún, lead.

Phai [Siamese] cotton.—Akú, seed.—Lai táng, sugar-cane.

Achongkeng, soldier.—Tap, a fort.

Nat tallau, musket.

Tanyang, pity.—Sako, anger.—Théng préng, a tomb.

Kkún, king.—Nangmú, queen.—Taneng, a year.—Tasa, a day.

An, many.—Chén, few.—Tan, great.—Pe pe, little.

A divinity, Phra.

Kaba, - - one.

Ní, - - two.

Soin, - - three, - - - sam in Siamese.

Let, - - four.

Ngant, - - five, - - - haa, ditto.

Sú, - - six.

Nut, - - seven, - - - chet, ditto.

Sát, - - eight, - - - pet, ditto.

Kot, - - nine, - - - kau, ditto.

Tachí, - - ten, - - - seep, ditto.

Tirrea, - - one hundred. ráe, ditto.

Tirreung, - one thousand.

Tamun, - ten thousand, mún, ditto.

A THAUMPE SONG<sup>1</sup>.

Ponleng daungrí tirra—tung páma kyú—  
 Tung chú má kháng—má kucháng—  
 Au pu nam—au kám docí má—  
 Aphéng docí séng—aphai docí mai  
 Along má kháng chú chú—makýú  
 Lon lon au nau lang lang—  
 Au thang lon lon—au kun nú nú.  
 Au tú yí yí—au kí phra phra  
 Au la rá rá—lo pháng ko akat  
 Nang myat sára—sattí ue. (*Chorus.*)  
 Mí mí nang hau—som chú má hau—  
 Sompa séng puttanya—arong akrong séng chéng kathéng  
 Chon me lep le—se kya ara—net sak hau rak—  
 Hau chúm ho múm—hachú ngau nú  
 Hau no se kya—ang sú prasattí ue rin. (*Chorus.*)

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## CHE-UNG MAI, OR NORTH LAOS.

## GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION.

NORTH LAOS, or that tract of country comprehended under the title of Che-ung Mai, is bounded as follows:—On the north and north-east are the Che-ung-dau hills, in and part of Yunnan; on the south, Siam; on the east are hills dividing it from South Laos; and on the west it is bounded by a range of the Daé Suthep mountains, which separates it from the Burman dominions. The space thus hemmed in by hills appears to be of an oblong shape, and to contain an area of about 300 miles long, by 100 broad at the utmost. The outlets to this country are few and difficult; there is not any very practicable route in the direction of Ava; and that one leading to South Laos has been neglected; the route to Siam is the one which is best known, and of the most importance to the people of North Laos. About thirty miles, by report, westward of the Suthep range,

<sup>1</sup> The Shaans were not well enough versed in Burmese to enable me to obtain a correct translation of these verses. They were, they said, in praise of British valour, which shows that they can temporize like other people.

This song was sung to me by one of the *Plaau* with much simplicity of style and with hat in hand, which he managed so as to give him a sort of theatrical air. This hat, with a brim of umbrella-like capacity, he held in his right hand, and then applying the fore finger of his left to his left ear, and inclining a little to that side, he began the song.

flows the Mé Khong, or Martaban river; here, at a place called Ban mé nam héng, or "Dry river village," nearly in the latitude of Che-ung Mai, it is about fifty yards broad; it is not navigable. The boundary of the two countries is marked by the Dong Phrýa Fai, a range of hills stretching east and west, and thus closing up the great valley of Siam. The Mé Nam, or great river of Siam, forces a passage through this belt, and is here so turbulent and so obstructed by rocks, as not to be navigable by boats. The Laos road leads over a pass on the west side of the river; it requires one day to cross the range; but although the latter is about from 2000 to 3000 feet in general elevation, yet the extreme height of the break or pass is only about 900 feet. A guard of 500 Laos, under a rachesan or officer, is here stationed to guard this frontier.

A march of three days on an elephant, or about twenty-five miles a day, brings the traveller to the fortified town of Pho-khíau, which lies on the west bank of the river, and is the capital of a district of the same name. The walls, which are of stone, faced with bricks, and about twenty-four feet high, enclose a space of about 300 yards on each side; there is a wet ditch twenty-four feet distant from the walls, and this communicates by a canal with the river, which last is about five fens distant; it is thus kept constantly filled.

On each face there is one chief gate, besides two inferior ones—one on each side of it. At each of the four angles of the square, is a brick bastion with a demi-arched roof. There are no guns on the walls, but it is said there are about 400 swivels in the place, and many muskets; the latter are of an inferior description, being either bought in Siam, or obtained from the Chinese province of Kéo. Those from Kéo bear no mark. Match-locks are seldom used, and the muskets are not completed with bayonets. This being a frontier province, every registered man is allowed to wear arms; the fort is garrisoned by 500 soldiers; the district contains about 30,000 souls, and can bring about 8000 fighting men into the field. I have learned that 20,000 males were registered two years ago, but I have adopted the lowest scale.

The silk-worm is reared in this province, and is fed on the mulberry, and on the leaf of a shrub called chak chan; cotton, wax, sapan-wood, rice, tobacco, and indigo, are the common products.

One day's march from Pho-khíau brings the traveller to Pho-khan, which is the chief town of another district so named; it is also fortified with a wall similar to that of Pho-khíau, and its population is reported to equal that of the latter place. About two days northward of Pho-khan is Che-ung Mai, the capital of North Laos, which

is reckoned fourteen days' journey on an elephant from Bangkok, at the rate of about 1000 sens a day; but a despatch can be conveyed in six or seven days. The stages of it are: 1, Krung, or the old capital; 2, Phí-chít, an open town; 3, Phí-chai, also an open town; 4, Ban-pho; 5, Pho-khíau; 6, Pho-khan; 7, Che-ung Mai. Like Asiatic cities of old, it consists of a wide area, in which are numerous gardens and orchards; the walls form a square, each face of which is about six miles in extent; formerly there was an inner square, but it has been dispensed with to admit of the population finding room. At each of the angles there is a pá-m, or bastion, with a demi-arched roof of bricks, where five or six small guns (about four-pounders) are mounted; the wall is composed of a pudding-stone, or breccia, which has been dug from the surrounding country; the blocks, when cut out, are soft, and about four and a-half feet square, and one foot thick; but on exposure they speedily harden, and are afterwards very durable; the cement used is composed of lime, (obtained from limestone,) coarse sugar, a bark of a tree, (the kulit teja of the Malays,) pounded and lixiviated, and boiled buffalo-hide.

The wall is four waa, or twenty-four feet high; the rampart contains loop-holes for musketry, and the pathway along it is twenty feet wide, with a sloping bank of earth down to the area of the place; on the outside of this wall there is a ditch, without any facing of brick or stone, kept in very bad order, but reported unfordable. It is about 100 yards distant from the Mé-nam, or river of Siam, but does not communicate with it; the distance between this ditch and the wall is thirty-six feet; in each face there are three gates, the centre one of each being termed the "war gate."

There were two inner walls formerly, but the citadel, where the prince resides, is the only space now enclosed. This court occupies the centre of the great square of the fort, and is defended by a wall of bricks eighteen feet high; the chief's house is of brick and wood, with a tiled roof. There are four roads, lined with bazaars, stretching from each of the principal gates to the citadel; the gates are guarded by about 300 men.

The Mé-nam Yai is here about thirty yards wide, and so shallow in the dry season that it is everywhere fordable, scarcely reaching the knee, and is only navigable by the flimsiest description of canoes; in the rains it swells to a rapid and deep torrent; large boats can then run down to Pho-khan, but more go northward. The navigation betwixt North Laos and Siam is interrupted at the Dong-phrí-u-fai range, for here the river forces a passage amongst rocks and over precipices.

In former times the Laos or Lau territories embraced the following states : Che-ung Mai, Lauchaung Lamphun, Phré, Naan, Sung, Lakhon Lau, Pho-khíau, Pho,khan, and others ; but the ambition and restless jealousy of the Siamese have induced them successively within the last few years to attack and destroy the whole of these countries, with exception of the three here comprehended under the title of North Laos. They sacked Weung Chan (or Lauchang), where a great slaughter of its inhabitants took place ; the prince fled with about 5000 people to the Cochin-Chinese territory, and about an equal number were carried back as captives to Siam ; but of these last, 2000 are said to have died of cholera morbus.

Lauchang may be supposed to have contained a population of 50,000 souls, as the Siamese found it requisite to detach an army of 12,500 men against it. This army consisted of,—

|                                    |   |   |   |   |   |                    |
|------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|--------------------|
| Mons, or Peguers,                  | - | - | - | - | - | 2,000              |
| Burmans,                           | - | - | - | - | - | 500                |
| Siamese, under Khun Lo-ung Wan Na, | - | - | - | - | - | 3,000              |
| Ditto, under Kromma rak,           | - | - | - | - | - | 3,000              |
| Ditto, under Kromma tibet Dawan,   | - | - | - | - | - | 2,000              |
| Kromma thepreni,                   | - | - | - | - | - | 1,000              |
| Kromma thep yotha                  | - | - | - | - | - | 1,000              |
|                                    |   |   |   |   |   | <hr/> 12,500 <hr/> |

The war originated in the Laos people refusing to send the golden flower—the usual mark of homage.

There are some reasons for the supposition that Che-ung Mai lies on or near what was once the famous Bamian<sup>1</sup> route from India to China and Camboja, and which was pursued by traders before navigation was opened.

The Laos allege that the provinces of Péchagu chalang, Sang phak, and Letawang, lying westward from Che-ung Mai, were wrested from them by the Burmans in the 993rd year of the Laos era (A. D. 1571).

#### POLITICAL CONDITION.

THE people of North Laos owe, perhaps, their independence to the happy situation of their country. It is naturally strong, and lies at a convenient distance from its neighbours—the Burmans and Siamese ; it has been frequently attacked by both of these nations, but seems at present quite unconnected with them ; when threatened by one of these, it has always the option of calling in the aid of the

<sup>1</sup> Asiatic Researches,

other; the same circumstances did not affect South Laos, so that the Siamese effected an easy conquest of it. It is believed, too, that the North Laos people are fully matched in courage with the Siamese.

#### POPULATION.

By information obtained from individuals who have long resided in Che-ung Mai, I am induced to rate its population at a maximum of 150,000 souls; if to this be added that of the Lower Provinces, Pho-kháu and Pho-khan, we shall have about 200,000 souls for the whole of North Laos. Mr. Crawford has considered the whole Laos states to contain 840,000 inhabitants<sup>1</sup>. But of all these countries not one now exists in an independent state, excepting North Laos.

The Siamese do not seem ambitious of retaining conquests on the N.E. frontier; and to prevent annoyance from that quarter, have converted the subdued countries of South Laos into a desert.

The people of North Laos call the Siamese T'hai Meu-ung (or Mu-ung) tai, meaning "Inhabitants of the Low Country," and themselves are termed by the Siamese, Chau Núa, "people of the interior." The Laos reckon thirty branches from their original stock, as an old native of the country informed me. He only, however, recollected five,—the Siamese, Lanchangese, Khamenese, Lawa, and Yang. The people of Che-ung Mui consist of three classes,—Laos, Chinese, and Siamese; the Chinese amount to about five hundred, and the Siamese are still less numerous.

#### HISTORY AND ERAS.

The early history of the Laos is involved in much the same sort of obscurity as that of any of the surrounding nations. As it is pretty evident, however, that they had no letters until the introduction of the Pali character and language amongst them, we can thence trace back with some precision to the period when they emerged from absolute barbarism into a comparatively civilized state.

They are the original stock, as they allege, whence the Siamese sprung, and which the latter do not deny; and there cannot be much doubt of their having progressed from some more northern or north-western region, since the people of Khamti, bordering on Assam, speak a language scarcely differing from the Siamese. Siam may have been, perhaps, the Siam Des, or the "country of itself,"

<sup>1</sup> Embassy to Siam.

described in the Mahawanso, and known to the Singalese Priests. The Chang Priests of Assam also speak a dialect of the Siamese. The Siamese separated, or branched off, about A.D. 813, according to the Laos accounts, a circumstance which deprives them of any claim to superior antiquity.

The Laos civil era commences A.D. 638, and their astronomical one, 544 years before the christian era. Their year begins with the third day of their seventh month, or our July, and the same cause may be given for this peculiarity, which has been assigned as that which probably gave rise to the fifth Siamese month being reckoned the first of their year<sup>1</sup>. The epochs here alluded to, correspond respectively with the civil and sacred or astronomical Burman periods. With their religious era, their civil one does not correspond, for this reason, that the former is that of the founder of the religion, and not that of its introduction into Laos.

The Laos of old termed their country *Chí Mai*, "Priests' dominion," and *Sowanna phom*, or "The golden Brahma." The first prince dreamed that Brahma descended in refulgent glory, and put into his hands a golden pipul tree, which he was desired to plant as the ensign around which a powerful nation would be collected. On awaking, he cast his eyes on a real pipul tree, which was immediately guarded, and by its sheltering influence, the people multiplied, and gave laws to their neighbours. In addition to the pipul tree, *Phra Eén*, or *Indra*, condescended to present the prince with an emerald, possessing extraordinary protecting virtues.

I have not been able to obtain the list of the kings who succeeded to the throne during the long interval which seems to have elapsed from the founding of the dynasty until the succession of *Chau-mu-úng Phakú*, or king *Phakú*. He is stated to have reigned in 410, of their civil era, or 1048 of Christ.

*Phakéo*, brother of *Phakú*, succeeded him in the government. He was attacked by the Burmans under *Chau fa Sutt'ho*, who reduced and occupied the capital, *Che-ung Mai*. This general, or prince (for it is not specified which), had scarcely settled himself in the government, when *Chau Thepphasing*, a priest of Buddha, threw off the yellow sacerdotal mantle, drove the Burmans out of the

<sup>1</sup> The Egyptian year of old, had its first month *Thoth*, shifted during the circular period of 1460 years, through all the signs or seasons, until it came round to the same place again.—(Maurice.)

M. Cassini conjectures, that the same arrangement of the fifth month becoming the first of the year, which obtains in Siam, was owing to an error in their system, by which the vernal equinox had lost ground and receded.

country, and assumed the sovereignty of North Laos. This priest was, in his turn, expelled by Ongkhan, the chief of an emigration from South Laos. The circumstances are thus narrated.

At the great festival of holding the plough, which took place at the period preceding the event alluded to, at Lanchang, the capital of South Laos, Ongkhan, who was the brother of the reigning prince, transgressed the ordinances of Buddha, by killing some game in the forest. Although this offence might have been overlooked, still the king, who was jealous of his return to the city, seized the opportunity to exile him; he was informed that he might take his adherents along with him, to any region whither he might prefer to bend his steps. Ongkhan collected five thousand men, with their families, and advancing in a north-westerly direction, through the petty states or provinces of Naan Phré, and Lakhán, reached a pipul tope, in the vicinity of Che-ung Mai. Thepphasing was totally unprepared for this irruption; he therefore fled to Lamphún with his forces<sup>1</sup>; the principal remaining inhabitants of Che-ung Mai, being deserted by their ruler, sent out a deputation to the invader, requesting him to take possession of the country; he replied, with affected modesty, that he only sought an asylum for his people. While negotiations were pending, an army of Burmans approached the capital, upon which Ongkhan marched into it with his whole party, and by uniting his efforts with the besieged, repulsed the Burman forces; he now no longer refused to accept of the proffered authority, that is to say, he usurped it.

Ongkhan was succeeded by his son Chau-há-ná; this prince gave his daughter, Nang-Túm, in marriage to Talapan, a Laos officer, who endeavoured to subvert the government; but his project proving futile, he fled to Tangpuchaya. Chau-há-ná died, and was succeeded by Chau-túng, his brother. The Burmans nearly destroyed Che-ung Mai in this reign, and they carried the prince captive to their capital. Chau Kawíla, a Laos of Lakhán, taking advantage of the confused state of affairs, made himself king.

He was succeeded by his brother, who, dying, left the kingdom to the son of Kawíla. His successor was his son, whose name was not mentioned to me.

Beyond this reign, I could procure no chronological information. The several reigns alluded to may have occupied a period of 200 years, so that there remains a space of about 570 years to fill up.

<sup>1</sup> If this account be literally correct, the population of Che-ung Mai must have been then very limited.

## GOVERNMENT.

The government of North Laos is conducted in nearly the same manner as in Siam; the prince now governing, is termed Chau Che-ung Mai, "Lord of Che-ung Mai," and he is assisted by four councillors, who in fact govern on all ordinary occasions; these are Phriya Chichasén, Phriya Sítthísan, Phriya Chai Máukrí, Chat-údom. It is a despotic government, and the succession hereditary; it seems to have originally consisted of petty feudal states, which acknowledged one head; the prince is expected to be visible twice a day to his subjects, to hear and redress grievances, and to distribute rice and provisions to the priesthood.

The king is absolute, but necessity and self-interest have induced many anomalies and usages, tending to ameliorate the condition of the subject, and to place the real authority of the ruler on a footing similar, nearly, to that of a patriarchal chief, or the principal member of an aristocracy, who only exhibits his power when it is attacked or questioned. Shut out from all extensive intercourse with the most civilized Indian States, the people of Laos seem to be simple in their habits and brave in war.

## LAWS.

THEIR laws are derived, through the channel of the Pali, from the reputed code of Menu; altered they undoubtedly must have been from the ordinances of that, perhaps, fictitious lawgiver, and mixed they certainly are with many extraneous enactments arising out of the peculiarities in the habitudes and character of the people. The Pali codes extant in Siam, called Kot, are chiefly—1, Phra Ayakaan, from the Pali Phra Racha Kanyat or Criminal Law; 2, Dhammasaat, from the Dhammabot—Civil Law; 3, Tamnun regards institutions; 4, Lak Bínyapat, judicial regulations; 5, Krommasak, on Fines.

The law is administered by four sena, or judges, and about eight khon pho tém nang su, or registrars; these judges are the four councillors. The laws are not preserved in the Pali, but in the proper Laos character, so that any one may study them; they are not, apparently, enforced with such rigour as those of Siam, where torture and flagellation not unfrequently precede trial; but their general tenour may be deemed the same as that of the Siamese codes. The testimony of the relatives of parties in civil cases is

seldom received, but in criminal cases it is allowed. The law requires three witnesses to convict an accused person. Retailers of spirits, and some other classes, are not admitted to give evidence. Murder is in general punished by imprisonment and stripes; rarely by death; the relatives of the murdered person are allowed to receive the price of blood, or a compensation from the culprit, when the latter may be set at liberty; although this is not a necessary consequence. In cases of treason, or other state offences, pagoda robberies, arson, and other atrocious crimes, great severity is often used—decapitation, crucifixion, and laying open of the stomach; suspension in an iron cage over gunpowder, which is exploded, and which seldom kills at once, are a few of their punishments. Robbing a pagoda is a heinous offence; twelve years ago a case of this sort occurred, and the culprits, five in number, were burned alive. Theft is punished by stripes, imprisonment, and confinement in an iron cage, perhaps for life. In cases of adultery, should the husband discover the parties together, he may kill the paramour of his wife; but if the man gets off, a fine only is imposed.

The laws regarding inheritance are specific. The survivor of a married couple inherits the property which belonged to both. The children succeed according to seniority, the eldest receiving the largest share, and the other shares diminishing downwards to the youngest. The subject is allowed to have a property in the soil, and to alienate or dispose of it at pleasure; waste land or jungle may be occupied by any man who may choose to take possession; his having cultivated it establishes his right therein.

#### CUSTOMS.

MARRIAGE is merely a civil institution amongst the Laos; although polygamy is permitted, yet few have more than one lawful wife; the chief has one wife, and about thirty concubines. There is little restriction on the intercourse betwixt the sexes; the lover visits the parents of his mistress, carrying some trifling presents; he then makes known the purport of his visit, upon which the girl is called, and questioned whether she consents to admit of his addresses; if her reply is in the affirmative, little time is lost in settling the preliminaries; a feast is given, generally at the expense of the richest party, and offerings of pigs, poultry, &c., are made to the manes of deceased ancestors, in a similar manner as in Chinese solemnities.

In this respect they deviate from the custom of the Siamese, who only make offerings on such occasions to Buddha; the offerings are discussed by the guests.

A túman, or priest, is requested to attend at the house of the bride; the chief purpose for which priests are called does not relate to the actual ceremony; his presence is required to invoke superior orders of beings if benign, and to propitiate them if malignant ones. He there recites many religious Pali formula, particularly that one which may be termed "the Buddhist Confession of Faith," formerly noticed, beginning thus: "Namo tassa bhagavato arahato samma sambuddhassa utthang saranang kachamí thammang, sarauang," &c. The priest next fills a jar with water, which he consecrates by putting into it some leaves of the cocoa-nut tree and other substances; this water is sprinkled over the bride and bridegroom, on the door-posts, and over other parts of the house, as a charm against the agency of malignant spirits; the priest, having then received some presents, returns home. The couple are afterwards placed on a mat, and the elders ask them whether they desire to be married. If they reply in the affirmative, then the mother of the bridegroom, or some other elderly person, makes each of them drink a portion of the consecrated water; with the remaining water they wash their hands and faces. She then ties the hands of the bridegroom and bride together, imploring from the "Thirty-two holy relics of Buddha," every temporal blessing to be their lot; this concludes the ceremony, and the man, on horseback, like the bridegrooms of India, followed by a cavalcade, conveys the bride home. The parents of the married pair bestow goods and such property as they can spare on them.

In Laos a divorce is not common, but both parties being willing, they may be formally separated.

They burn their dead in Laos; a coffin having been prepared, and the deceased put into it, a priest attends to repeat set Pali forms. Having finished his task, he is complimented with clothes, fruits, &c., and departs. A feast is now given to the relatives of the deceased and visitors; these last, not being expected to mourn greatly the loss of the deceased, are, to prevent them going away, entertained with dramatic exhibitions and chess. The priest returns to a place near the house on the second day, and leads the procession, which meets him there; the coffin, being placed on the pile, is consumed by fire, or left exposed to the birds; and the priest repeats some sacred passage over the body.

The people of this country may sell their services, and they

become then what are termed to the eastward amongst Malays, debtor servants, or slaves debtors. On payment of the original sum, they are free, provided nothing specific as to the period of service be included in the agreement.

The music and musical instruments of the Laos are similar to what the Siamese have, but fewer, and they are inferior to that people in whatever relates to public show or theatrical entertainment. Their instruments are, klúf, a flute; phen, a sort of bagpipe; musical bowls, drums, tambourines, cymbals, castanets, trumpets, and other instruments like those of the Siamese.

Amongst their favourite games is chess, and a sort of dice; and they have lately introduced theatrical entertainments and tight-rope dancing.

The Laos eat almost any kind of animal food, although rice is the chief article in their daily fare. They serve up their meals on circular trays and in small china cups. They use, when they can get it, a strong infusion of tea along with their rice; the tea-shrub does not grow in the low country; it is cultivated by the Lawa, a wild tribe, who, like the Kareans of the interior provinces of Burma, inhabit the hilly and jungly tracts.

The skins of buffaloes and oxen are much relished; these are roasted, scraped, and then cut into slips. The Laos help themselves with their fingers only; the rice is boiled, and mashed, and served up in lumps.

#### HUSBANDRY.

The farmers, chiefly women, begin to plough their fields in Che-ung Mai, (as formerly in Che-ung Sen and Che-ung Tung,) in their eighth month, or August, when the rains begin; they reap in the second month. The only rice cultivated is the *Oryza glutinosa*; and as there is no market for surplus grain, it is so cheap as ten thanan<sup>1</sup> for a cent of a dollar; all the country from the fort to the hills is cultivated with this rice.

It would appear that in the province of Pe-Chagu, Chalang Tang phak, and Letawang, which lie betwixt Ava and Che-ung Mai, they begin to plough the surface in the same (eighth) month. In Lamphún, Phre, and Nuan, lying further south, and in Siam, still further south, it begins rather later.

They follow the Hindoos in dividing their year into three seasons; viz., wasanta, the rainy; hemanta, the cold; and khímhanta,

<sup>1</sup> A measure called by the Malays guntang, containing about a gallon.

the hot season. Lying in a higher latitude, Che-ung Mai is exposed to greater vicissitudes of climate than Bangkok; the Burmans complain that it is cold and unhealthy. The rainy season would seem to set in here some time previous to its commencement in Siam; for Loubère (*Hist. Account of Siam*) observes, that in Siam the land becomes saturated by the swelling of the river long before the rain appears.

The rains in Laos are by no means so heavy as in the countries lying under more southern latitudes.

The implements of husbandry are a simple plough, a harrow, and spade, or hoe; the plough is dragged by two oxen, and the grain is sown broad-cast; buffaloes are also used in tillage. There are very few labourers for hire; the cultivators assist each other by turns in the various operations of husbandry; they cut the grain with the common sickle, leaving only as much of the stalk attached to the ear as is grasped by the hand of the reaper; the ears are collected on baked earthen floors, and trodden out by oxen. They use large wagons for the conveyance of goods.

The women assist in the rice cultivation, otherwise they are busied in various household duties; they spin cotton thread, and prepare silk for the loom, and of both they weave cloths; they attend also to petty bazaars, in the manner of the Burman women.

The hire of a labourer is about a quarter of a rupee a day. They have gold and silver smiths, iron smiths, loom makers, mat makers, potters, tailors, (who are Chinese,) embroiderers, and a variety of petty artisans. Women weave the silk cloth from the thread obtained from the silk worms.

#### PRODUCE AND TRADE.

PAPER of a coarse texture is made from the bark of a creeping plant termed by them *Salé*, and by the Siamese *Thrí-tsa-nayang*; the seeds of its fruit resemble a bean about an inch long; the bark is boiled in an ash ley, and when dissolved and macerated, is poured on the surface of water; frames on which cloth has been stretched are introduced beneath, and gently lifted up, so as to raise equally what is floating; the frames are then exposed to the sun, and the paper is taken off when dried.

In the preparation of leather, the skins are first exposed to the action of lime-water, then beaten, and dressed by an infusion of sapang.

Silk is manufactured by the inhabitants. The worm is reared on the leaf of the *mán* or mulberry-tree.

Tobacco grows all over the country.

The sugar-cane is cultivated, and coarse sugar is prepared from its juice; a coarse sugar is likewise made from date-tree sap. There are few Chinese in North Laos, which accounts for the infancy of this manufacture.

Phala, or cardamoms, and Phakkí, or coriander, grow in many parts of the country.

Black pepper is cultivated by a tribe called Yang, who frequent the hilly districts.

Three sorts of indigo are known, the same as have been noticed in the chapter on Martaban. Kham is the generic name; the species are kham noe, the true indigo; kham luk and kham baak, creeping plants.

Arrows are poisoned with the inspissated juice of the tree called Ya Khang Phumsen.

Castor, lac, musk, and krawan, or Indian leaf, are procurable in considerable quantities.

The following productions are found in various parts:—

Benjamin; khandak, a fragrant wood; ton reo, an acid fruit, eaten with the betel mixture; tamarinds; ton phútsa, or rhamnus *jujuba*, *Lin.*; ton let yáu; lok nom chang, a large fruit of a tree peculiar to the country, apparently; sek, a broad fruit; ton nom ngoá, ton nom k, nwai, two kinds of fruit; lok sau phríá chon let, "what a princess has looked at, with a wish to possess it," is the fruit of a creeping plant, sweet to the taste. Other fruits are plantains, duei kai, a sort of rambutan; cocoa-nut trees are scarce; betel vines are found wild. Sapan and teak wood are plentiful; a species of sandal wood is said to be procurable.

The Laos manufacture gunpowder; the sulphur is got from China and Siam; the charcoal is made from mango-tree wood, also from rice; the rind of the maknam, a large kind of gourd, is likewise used for this purpose.

Cotton, both white and brown, is raised for the manufacture of coarse cloth worn by the people.

The country abounds in elephants, buffaloes, oxen, and other animals, of the description found in Siam; also Laa, or asses, which are used to carry loads; there are no sheep. In fact, North Laos may be considered in part as forming the upper, although perhaps not the broadest portion of the valley of Siam.

## TRADE.

THE Laos used to trade chiefly with the Burmans, Siamese, Tonquinese, and the people of Kangtung (Quantong, apparently). In peaceful times they came down in large caravans to Rangoon, to barter their commodities for salt, cloth, spices, and other articles. The Tonquinese and other bordering people came to Laos by caravans, to barter their merchandise for the produce of the country. They transported these on horses or maa, and on laa, an animal which, from the description given, seems to be the ass; they have five spare horses, or laa, for every ten loads; they bring sulphur, cinnabar, gamboge, buradan, or yellow sulphuret of arsenic, used as a paint, and also in medicine,—borax, benjamin, (brought by the Chin-hu,) chaat, or factitious cinnabar, musk, silk, cloth, gold-thread, embroidered cloths, raw silk of a finer texture than that produced in Laos, steel, cutlery, paper, crockery, and other articles. These merchants may amount to about fifty yearly, possessing from ten to thirty horses each; they carry from Laos lac, sapan-wood and other dyes, small paroquets' skins dressed with the feathers on, which sell for about the value of half-a-crown each in Kangtung; ivory, rhinoceros' horns, wax, tin, plumbs for fishing-lines, and other articles.

A considerable trade was formerly, and I believe up to the period when the Burman war broke out, carried on betwixt Che-ung Mai, or the countries near it, and Rangoon. They transported their goods on the backs of horses and oxen, and occasionally employed wagons. It does not appear that they have traded much lately<sup>1</sup>, as most of my informants say that they have little intercourse now with the capital of Ava, or with countries lying to the northward of Che-ung Mai. As salt is an article in greatest request with the people of the interior, and this cannot be obtained except at a very enhanced price in most of the upper countries, we may suppose that they prefer the Rangoon market. In North Laos, however, they are not dependent on the coast for salt, as large quantities are collected in the hot season on their plains; it is more bitter than sea salt. Their other wares, such as lacquered boxes, drugs, jaggery, or coarse sugar, silks, and cottons, dyes, earth-nuts, and tea in a pickled state, here also bring the greatest profits they are capable of yielding, while those they take in exchange, viz., woollens, piece-goods, spices, &c., are obtained cheaper than at any other accessible mart. Many

<sup>1</sup> This was written in 1825.

pilgrims to the shrine of Buddha at Shúi Dagon pagoda in Rangoon, accompany the caravan. The merchants travel with their whole families, goods, and chattels, in the manner Symes, in his account of Ava, has described a caravan he saw in the upper country :—" On our return we met a caravan of wagons travelling from the southern country towards the capital, eighteen in number. Each wagon was drawn by six bullocks, and several spare ones followed ; a good tilted roof of bamboos, covered with painted cloth, threw off the rain. They contained not only merchandise, but also the entire families—the wives, children, monkeys, cats, paroquets, and all the substance of the wagoner. They travel slowly, from ten to fifteen miles a day," &c. (This cannot be reckoned slow, in a country destitute of made roads.)

The mart to which the Chinese and Burman mutually resort for trade lies apparently far to the northward of Che-ung Mai.

Captain Wilford (*Essay in Trans. of Asiatic S. of Calcutta*, p. 59) has quoted the Abbé Grosier respecting this subject, who, in his *History of China*, informs us, that to Ponceul, a village in Yunnan, on the frontiers of Assam, Ava, and Laos, people resort from the adjacent regions, but that the entrance is forbidden to foreigners, (who are meant by foreigners?) who are not allowed to approach nearer than the bottom of the mountains (the Súthep range most probably).

And the *Periplus*, according to the above authority, describes what the latter supposes to be evidently a tribe of the Laos :—" On the confines of China, there is a nation of a short stature, with flat foreheads and flat noses ; they are called Sesutæ, and by Ptolemy Basadæ." It may here, however, be remarked, that the Laos are by no means a diminutive people, and may be considered about the middle size, and that their noses and foreheads are not so flat as to be thereby remarkable.

North Laos yields some gold ; but the average profit, after sifting the sand or earth, and collecting the grains, does not, it is said, average above one quarter-rupee a day to each adventurer ; it is principally found in the beds of the streams descending from the Súthep range of hills ; and mines exist also at Layang, where it is found mixed with the soil, and at Dáe Kham. Silver is found both here and in the Naan province, but rather sparingly, in a stony matrix. Tin ore abounds in the beds of hill-torrents, in the shape of gravel ; the matrix is of a red or ochry colour. Limestone rocks abound.

Amongst precious stones they have taphím, or the ruby ; káo,

or rock crystal; the topaz; *keo ká*, or *marakot*, the amethyst; *tulapatha*, or turquoises; *ta meo*, (lit.) cat's eye, or *keo phaluk* of the Siamese; *cornelians*, river pearls, *alabaster*.

The most famous place for yielding gems appears to be near *Dáe Kham*, at a spot termed *Dán ton ngoa sa*. Here a cow (but not a white one) is yearly sacrificed to the spirits of the ground, to prevent them taking offence at the invasion of their precincts—a direct infringement of the law of Buddha, which is their religious code. A representation of the divine foot of Buddha is at the same time borne aloft to charm away all malignant spirits.

The trade with the Siamese consists, Mr. Crawford observes, in exporting their produce and exchanging it for grain, salt, &c.; he states also, that boats leaving *Che-ung Mai* in August and September, do not reach *Bankok* until November and December, and the return of a party cannot be effected under one month; in fact the voyage only extends up to the cross range of hills.

#### DRESS AND APPEARANCE.

THE LAOS are, generally viewed, a fairer complexioned race than the Siamese or Burmans, and they have the stature and strength of the latter. Kiemper has remarked, that they resemble the Chinese in shape and mien, but are more slender and much handsomer than the Siamese; he adds, that they are more tawny than the Chinese. They seem to me to resemble the Burmans, rather than the Chinese. Dr. Leyden has remarked, that they resemble the *Móns* or *Peguers* in their external appearance; the *Móns* seem to me to have darker complexions, and are more squat in figure.

The Laos tattoo their bodies like the Burmans, but generally confine the operation to their legs; the breast is occasionally tattooed with red colour, in this respect totally differing from the Siamese, who reject the custom, deeming it a sign of barbarism. They bore and distend the lobe of the ear, and instead of rings, thrust rolls of gold, or silver, or of light wood, into the holes. They generally go naked from the waist upwards, although they, like the Siamese, have jackets, and like the Burmans, large pieces of coloured cloth, which they occasionally use as plaids; silk chequered cloth is universally worn by both sexes.

The woman wear a petticoat of silk sewed to a cotton bodice, without sleeves, dyed red; but the former is not open like the Burman women's gowns, and it reaches to the feet. The bodice, like that of Malayan, Burman, and Chinese women, is drawn tight over

the breast, a practice which soon aids the climate in injuring the bust. They do not wear shoes. They have bracelets when grown up, but children wear both these and anklets; unmarried girls wear silver-thread bracelets. Rings are worn by the women only, on ordinary occasions, but the men put on rings on festival days. The women tie their hair in a knot on the crown, like Malayan women, and dress it with golden ornaments. Kæmpfer, in casually alluding to this nation, says, that the women before marriage, wear gold and silver rolls in their ears.

The king's wives ride on elephants, with spearmen attending.

Great men have turbans with gold embroidered flowers in front; a large roll of white cloth is also used as a turban, after the Burman fashion.

The Laos are firm believers in necromancy, and their neighbours, the Siamese and Burmans, being nearly as credulous, allow them the merit of being special adepts; so much so, that they fancy the magic and incantations of a man of Laos, can visit with disease and misfortune a person residing in Ava, or Bankok.

#### FORCE.

The Northern Laos, nearly wedged as it were betwixt more powerful states, might be supposed to stand in need of an efficient army for its defence. It is not, however, the policy of any of these states to support an expensive standing army, and Laos, therefore, only maintains a sufficient number to garrison the walled towns, perhaps 1500 men; but the population may admit of a levy, *en masse*, of 50,000 men. People are not permitted to carry arms within the walls. The soldier is dressed in a red jacket, if he can afford it, and short drawers; the jacket has half sleeves, and is furnished with cloth buttons in front. Chiefs wear turbans with gold embroidery in front, or large white turbans, like the Burmans. Soldiers carry their powder in bamboos; and the balls, which are made of tin, in bags, wrapped round the waist; the gunpowder is manufactured here, and saltpetre abounds.

They are considered a sufficiently brave race, in the Indo-Chinese acceptation of that term. They could, perhaps, raise ten thousand men on an emergency; every man is more or less a soldier, and used to some sort of warlike weapon; their arms are similar to those of the Siamese, fire-arms, spears, swords and shields, and bows; and there is a regular armoury.

## CURRENCY.

The coins used in North Laos are curved pieces of silver, called baat, rounded at the edges, and about the value of a sicca rupee; and cowries or shells, as in Bengal; on the baat are impressions of the Chakra or discus, and the trident.

## LANGUAGE.

The language of the Northern Laos, being nearly the same as that of the Siamese, need not here be largely descanted on. They employ a character nearly the same as that of the Burmese.

## RELIGION.

From the Laos Kadí-lok, or traditional history, it would appear that they were Sabaists, previous to their conversion to Buddhism. The exact period of this last event cannot be easily ascertained; it was in all probability introduced before the Siamese emigration took place, and may agree with their civil era, as before noticed, or A.D. 638.

When Pegu fell under the dominion of the Burmans, some Roman Catholic Missionaries, it is said, accompanied many refugees of the former nation to Che-ung Mai. It is not probable that they made many converts, from the circumstance that the people whose minds they had to work on, although not bigots, are attached to their religion, because it is suited to their habits, because it tolerates, if it does not openly permit, freedom of conscience, and because it is attended by that degree of glitter and splendour in its rites, which rivets the attachment of a people not rendered susceptible, by education or example, of more sober and rational religious impressions. They will at all times be perfectly willing to grant, that when the period of Buddha has expired, there will be nothing to prevent their adopting any other religious principles which may be divinely promulgated to them; but of that period there are several thousands of years yet to elapse.

With regard to their sacred language, the Pali, the Sanscrit scholar may here see at once that the great original, which so powerfully influenced the nations of a large portion of the globe, after it had ceased to exist as a living language, has, in reality, descended to the Laos and Siamese, in a form but little divested of its native purity.

The chief festivals of the Laos, are Trút and Songkhraan (Sonkranti). The Trút falls in the fourth month, and lasts from the disappearance of the old to the appearance of the new moon. Songkhraan happens in the fifth month, and is the Cheng-beng of the Chinese. Khau-pasa happens in the eighth month, on the first day of the moon's decrease. Ak-pasa, and Saat, fall in the eleventh month, on the first night of the decrease, when the great car is dragged about in Siam, in commemoration of the visit of Buddha to the Tavatinga, or the Heaven of Indra. It seems that the great Buddhist festivals, namely the one where the car is drawn about by a multitude of people, and the other where the cattle are decorated with garlands, and which are both kept in Siam, do not obtain in Laos.

It is curious that the people of Laos, in whose country, it is generally acknowledged by surrounding nations, the most venerated temple of Buddha, Nang-rúng, is extant, should take the trouble of making pilgrimages to his shrine at Rangoon. The superior splendour of this last, may have induced the custom; besides, in the double capacity of merchant and devotee, his enthusiasm is put to no severe test. This famous temple, Nang-rúng, is many days' journey N.W. of Che-ung Mai, whither pilgrims resort from the neighbouring regions.

Leyden has alluded to four celebrated footsteps of Buddha in Laos, which are objects of extended devotion. These, however, are not dispersed, but have been formed into one representation at Nang-rúng, rising like the steps of a pedestal above each other. This Temple lies in the forest of Pa-deng, "red forest;" a Siamese who had gone there in the retinue of the heir apparent of Che-ung Mai, described it to me. The building has nothing very remarkable about it; and, divested of its antiquity, the particulars regarding which are wanting, it would be passed by as an ordinary building.

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